

# St Alban's Catholic Primary School



## Packed Lunch Policy 2023

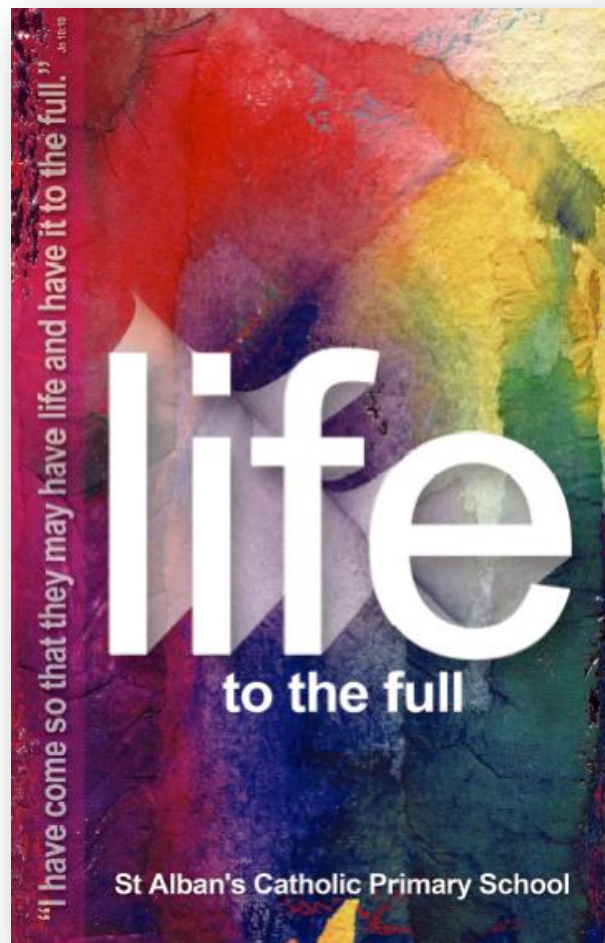
Guidance and recommendations for parents regarding packed lunches in school.  
To be read in conjunction with the Oral Health Policy.

## Mission Statement

Jesus said, 'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full'. (John 10:10)

We will strive towards this vision by:

- Offering a safe and welcoming environment for all;
- Leading the children to a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and fostering the growth of that faith in every member of the school community;
- Enveloping the school in prayer, making worship and liturgy inspiring and meaningful for all;
- Encouraging parents, with the parish community, to fulfil their responsibilities towards the spiritual development of their children especially in regard to the weekly celebration of Mass;
- Ensuring that all children are provided with a challenging and broad curriculum and are offered a wide variety of experiences;
- Expecting the highest standards of achievement and behaviour from all;
- Working in partnership with families to ensure each child reaches their potential.



## **Overall aim of the policy**

To ensure that all packed lunches brought from home and consumed in school (or on school visits) provide pupils with a healthy and nutritious diet that is similar to food served in schools, which is now regulated by national standards.

## **How and why the policy was formulated**

Monitoring evidence shows that many children often eat a packed lunch consisting mainly (and in some cases solely) of high fat, sugar and salt products such as chocolate, pastries, biscuits and crisps.

The problems associated with a poorly balanced diet are well documented through clear scientific evidence. In the short term, there can be a negative effect on concentration and behaviour but ultimately, in the long term, a poor diet can lead to diseases and conditions that are life threatening.

This policy aims to:

- make a positive contribution to children's health
- encourage a happier and calmer population of children and young people
- promote consistency between packed lunches and food provided by schools which must adhere to national school food standards.

This policy applies to all pupils and parents providing packed lunches to be eaten within school or on school visits during normal school hours.

Please visit <http://www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/schools/the-standards> for more information.

## **Responsibility of the school**

The school will provide facilities for pupils with packed lunches and ensure that free, fresh drinking water is readily available at all times.

The school will work with the pupils to provide attractive and appropriate dining room arrangements.

The school will work with parents to ensure that packed lunches meet the standards listed below.

As fridge space is not available in school, pupils are advised to bring packed lunches in insulated bags with freezer blocks where possible.

## Food and drink within packed lunches

Ideally, packed lunches should include:

- at least one portion of fruit or one portion of vegetables every day
- meat, fish or other source of non-dairy protein (e.g. lentils, kidney beans, chickpeas, houmous, peanut butter) every day
- oily fish, such as salmon, at least once every three weeks
- a starchy food such as any type of bread, pasta, rice, couscous, noodles, potatoes or other type of cereals every day
- dairy food such as milk, cheese, yoghurt, fromage frais or custard every day
- water or still juice.

We are aware that children can be 'fussy' eaters and they cannot be forced to eat things they do not like. Nevertheless, this does not mean that children cannot eat food items that are healthy options if the expectations are clear from school at home.

## Treats

Research shows that processed products which contain high levels fat, sugars and salt (e.g. biscuits, chocolate, crisps, pastries) are exceptionally addictive and are causing most problems in children's health. These products can be part of a healthy diet but should be a small part only.

As a result, packed lunches are to be limited to one treat per day e.g. a packet of crisps or a biscuit. Carbonated (fizzy) drinks, either in bottles or in a can, are not permitted.

## A Typical Packed Lunch

A typical packed lunch would contain the following:

- a sandwich (no chocolate spreads) or pasta/rice or meat/fish salad
- two portions of fruit or veg (e.g. a banana, an apple, a pear, strawberries, grapes (cut in half), pineapple pot, carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes)
- a yoghurt
- some cheese and possibly a cracker
- one treat
- water or juice

## Special diets and allergies

There will be children in school with special dietary requirements. The school will endeavour to support these children, especially where medical support is being given.

There are some children who have food allergies. It is essential that children do not share their food with others so that children with allergies do not eat something that could potentially harm them. We would ask that nuts are not brought into school in packed lunches.

## Assessment, evaluation and reviewing

Packed lunches will be regularly monitored by teachers, the SLT and lunch time supervisors. Where parents and pupils do not adhere to the packed lunch policy the following process will be implemented:

- In the first instance, a reminder of the policy will be provided.
- If there is a continuation of a child regularly bringing in a packed lunch that does not conform to the policy then the school will contact the parents to hold a meeting.
- The meeting will be held with the Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher.
- If the situation continues a meeting will be convened with a Governing Body committee.

## Responsibility of parents/carers

Pupils have the opportunity to eat the lunch provided by the school and we ensure flexibility so that children can have school meals at any time of their choosing. However, we understand that there will be parents and children who do not want a school meal and prefer a packed lunch. Parents of pupils wishing to have a packed lunch are expected to provide their children with packed lunches which conform to this packed lunch policy. In turn, the school will keep the parents and the school council informed as outlined below:

## Sharing the policy

The school will tell all parents/carers about the policy. It will be referred to in the school newsletter, website, school brochure and shared in assemblies.

The school will use opportunities such as parents' evenings and curriculum events to promote this policy as part of a whole school approach to healthier eating.

It will be shared with all school staff, including teaching and catering staff and the school nurse, securing their support in its implementation.

Some useful website links:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-food-standards-resources-for-schools>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

<https://www.allergyuk.org/living-with-an-allergy/at-school/>